

# THE NEWPORT PLAIN TALK

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(Eight Pages)

NO. 2

## COUNTY COURT RAPS THE TAX ASSESSOR

### ADOPTS REPORT CONDEMNING HIM

Board of Equalization Show the Conditions As They Found Them.

### CUTS THIRD OFF SALARY

Regular Quarterly Session of the Court is Held—A Pike Commission is Elected and a Fund Turned Over to Them for the Maintenance of the Pikes of the County.

The county court in session Monday named a pike road commission to look after the repair work of the pike: re-elected the old Revenue committee; censured the tax assessor for what the Board of Equalization termed neglect of duty; voted to pay the tax assessor just a portion of his salary and decided to make some improvements about the jail. It also paid many claims, including the ex-parte cost of the last circuit court amounting to \$1200, making the court the most expensive which has ever been held in Cocke county.

Every member of the court was present when Chairman Kyker called it to order. W. D. McSweeney read an act of 1901 which permitted any county to name a pike commission and after consideration the resolution which accompanied the same was adopted and the ten cents set aside at a previous session of the court for this purpose was turned over to this fund, as a special tax. The chairman of the county court is chairman of the pike commission, the following being elected to serve with him: Chas. O'Dell, who received 16 votes; J. W. Hartzell, who received 14 votes and J. D. Holdway, received 9 votes. James F. Neas was barely outside of the list as he received 8 votes. J. S. Green and Jack Cline both received a vote.

The chairman was instructed to build a new coal house, and Y. J. McMahan was ordered to buy a car load of coal for the county.

Esquire Wm. McMahan made a motion to a sum of 5 cents taken from the special levy of 20 cents and appropriated to the High Schools. After considerable argument and upon statement of Mr. Gorrell it was voted down by the court.

The report of the poor farm committee and the Board of Revenue were read. In the Board of Revenue report attention was called to balance due the county from the circuit court clerk.

The Del Rio Bridge committee reported that the bridge had been completed, the sum of \$1,000 being expended on same.

John Taylor of the Sixth district

and Thomas McGaha of the Fifth district were named as constables to wait on the next court.

Dr. Smith asked that a committee be named to accompany him to the jail and look into the unsanitary condition of same. Upon return of committee he warned the county that it would be liable for damages if any person became sick as a result of the unsanitary condition of the institution and as a result of the motion, the chairman and Y. J. McMahan were named as a committee to attend to same.

The following report was read by Wm. McMahan, chairman of the Board of Equalization:

Newport, Tenn., June 30, 1912. To the worshipful County Court, Cocke County, Tennessee.

We, the Board of Equalization, beg leave to submit to you the following report for your consideration:

First: We want to say, we have gone over the tax books and schedules made out by the County Assessor, D. R. McMahan, and find the same very much incomplete for the following reasons: (1) we only find about 120 schedules filled out and signed in various ways. Some of them are filled out and signed as they should be by the parties listing their property, but a larger per cent of them were not. Some of which were turned into the board by various parties after the board had been in session some time. (2) we want to say it appears by comparing the new and old tax books that the new have only been copied from the old ones. There being but a few changes made by the Assessor. All this being facts and the board finding no list of the parties refusing to qualify and list their personal property, the board being very much at a loss to know what to do, they adjourned for a few days and had the County Court Clerk to issue a subpoena and the Sheriff to summon the Assessor, D. R. McMahan, to appear before the board on a certain day and date, to explain to the board why such and such parties had not scheduled and listed their property subject to taxation. His answer was that so and so had told him that their property would not exceed their exemption. The board then offered to furnish him the information that certain parties who were not listed, were liable for taxes on personal, and asked him to assess such parties and assist the board in getting such parties before the board and have them to list their property subject to taxation. This the Assessor refused to do, and left undone, leaving the board to do as they saw fit in regard to the matter.

Second: The board then through legal advice proceeded to assess and raise the assessment on all such parties as the board from their knowledge and information believed to be liable for taxes on personal, and by so doing the board sent out something like one hundred notices. The most of which came before the board under oath and listed their property to be taxed. There

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### STORM DOES SOME DAMAGE

Deluge Swells Small Branch and Washes Away Pike Road Fill Near Rankin.

A heavy rain storm swept over this section last Thursday but missed Newport proper. A regular torrent of rain fell at Rankin and at George Murray's place above Newport two storms met, and a little dry branch was soon a roaring creek, carrying away a forty foot fill of the pike road, as clean as though it had been cut away. The fill was just East of the Murray place and the damage will amount to several hundred dollars.

Other damage was done to the pike at the Murray residence. The railroad trains were tied up for four hours because of a land slide in the Irish cut, several men being put to work to clean away the damage. Train No. 102 which came into Newport just after the storm was stalled here for four hours.

Considerable damage was also done to the crops alone where the rain was heaviest.

### FINE CANE FOR H. L. W. TAYLOR

Friends in National Council of Junior Orders Give Him Testimonial.

Hon. H. L. W. Taylor has returned from Fabron, N. H., where he attended the annual session of the National Council of the Junior Order United American Mechanics. He finished six years service in the offices of the National Council, having served two years as Vice National Councilor and two years as National Councilor before becoming Junior Past National Councilor, which office he has now retired from.

Before leaving Fabron, which is located at the very foot of Mt. Washington, twenty-six of his friends in the National Council asked him to meet with them and there he was presented with a magnificent solid gold mounted ebony cane, bearing the inscription "Presented to H. L. W. Taylor by his friends of the National Council June 1913"

While holding the three offices in National Council, Mr. Taylor has traveled extensively, having visited practically every state in the union. He is the only Tennessean who has ever been elected to either of these high offices. He is still a member of the Board of Control and this will occasion four trips per year.

### BIG CROWD HERE FOURTH

From Two to Three Thousand People Visited Newport.

### IT WAS A HUGE SUCCESS

People Had a Royal Good Time—Merchants Had Good Trade—Parade Enthused the People and Various Contests Brought Forth Some Fine Attractions—Co-operation Demonstrated.

Newport's Fourth of July celebration was a complete success. From two to three thousand visitors came here to celebrate the occasion and the entertainment afforded by the Newport merchants and citizens made it a most enjoyable day.

The celebration opened up with a band concert and baby show at the court house. It was not a beauty contest, but it was a baby show judged on merit of the child, and was an auxiliary of the "Better Baby" contests which are being inaugurated throughout the country. It was the second one to be attempted in Tennessee, and while the rush was such that the careful examination necessary to make the show what it was intended, it served to illustrate that Cocke county has some mighty fine babies, and prizes were awarded, where but an inch difference in measurement caused one child to drop a point, here and there. The several Newport physicians worked hard to get the proper rating of the children entered, there being twenty nine in the contest, and they were at work for several hours.

At 10 o'clock the big parade started. Several of the enterprising automobile owners had their cars decorated and they made a pretty picture. There were prettily decorated bicycles, too, several competing for the prizes offered in that event. The parade also carried the big wagon load of people, a wagon from the Seventh district carrying no less than 150 people. There were also the best riders, ladies and gentlemen; best saddle horse and other features to make the parade a success.

At the court house several prizes were awarded for individual events, and in the afternoon there was a ball game between Newport and Jefferson City. The game went nine innings with the score tied up at four each. The foot race was also held there and brought forth much enthusiasm.

The award of prizes was as follows: Best decorated automobile. First prize of \$15.00, won by Herbert Masters. Second prize of \$10 won by Mel Allen. Third prize of \$5 won by Geo. F. Smith.

Most attractive and best decorated pony rig, driven by boy or girl under 15 years—won by Margaret McSweeney.

Best decorated bicycle.—First prize of \$3.00 won by Raymond Wilson. Second prize of \$2.00 won by Sam Jack.

Prettiest girl on ground, \$6.00 Anso camera, won by Lagretta Cureton.

Best looking married lady on ground, (Continued on Page 2)

### POSTMASTERS MAY LOSE OUT

Scalps of a Large Number Are Hanging in the Balance.

### OFFENSIVE PARTISANSHIP

Is One of the Chief and Most Prolific of the Charges Made—Newport's Office Has Been Inspected and Postmaster Hicks Says He Does Not Fear Any Inspection Here.

First District postoffice officials are beginning to feel a trifle shaky in their boots, as the result of the activity of postoffice inspectors, recently. An inspector spent three days in Cocke county, apparently on a mission of friendliness with the postmasters but there are rumors that there was something behind his trip and that certain democrats are beginning to feel a longing for the local postoffices. As far as Newport is concerned, Postmaster Hicks has stated that he fears no inspection, that he has attended to the duties of postmaster in such a manner that no charges can be preferred against him, even by those who desire him to quit the office in order that they may be appointed.

At Sevierville, it is asserted that Postmaster Watson has been closely watched and that some political charges have been preferred against him. The following dispatch from Washington is interesting in view of the known activity of the inspectors:

Washington, July 7.—Charges filed by jealous, dissatisfied and envious republicans, covetous, revengeful, proud democrats or those who immediately want the offices themselves, against various and sundry republican postmasters throughout Tennessee are at last being investigated by the postoffice department and a wholesale decapitation is imminent. This procedure is being made on the initiative of the postoffice department as an administrative move. Neither of the Tennessee senators nor any of the democrats in congress from Tennessee have been advised of this plan of decapitation, nor have they any official knowledge thereof. They are in no sense a party thereto. It would not be surprising if at least one-half of the republican postmasters in Tennessee who are occupying presidential berths are not asked to resign—their removal ordered on reports of inspectors who have been in the field for the past two weeks.

It became known during the past few days that the postoffice department has at last heeded the large number of appeals that have been made to take up charges in various sections of the country. Certain men have been assigned to different sections, it is stated, and they have been investigating charges of political activity on the part of the postmasters during the past two years, allegations of collecting of funds for campaign purposes, contributions for the furtherance of candidates, reports of absence from the office without leave or at the expense of the service. (Continued on Page 2)

### GOV. HOOPER IN INTERVIEW

Tells People Facts About Refunding of the State Debt.

### APPROVES ACTION TAKEN

Had Two Alternatives Only—Sell or Let State Default—Big Fund and Close Market—The State's Credit Saved By Board's Action—The Lowest Rate of Interest Was Secured.

In an interview Governor Hooper had the following to say of the refunding of the state debt:

"The people are entitled to know all the facts about every step taken in connection with the refunding of the state debt.

"When Comptroller Woolen, Treasurer Hickerson and Secretary of State Speed, members of the Funding Board, went to New York, recently to borrow \$9,222,000 on short term notes to meet the state bonds due July 1, they had about one week in which to negotiate the loan and close the deal.

"On account of the large number of bills transmitted to me by the General Assembly, it was not possible for me to leave for New York until several days after the other members of the board went. They conducted the negotiations for the loan and on the day I left Nashville, sold the notes. I want to say just here, however, that I was kept informed by them as to the progress of the transaction; that I acquired fuller details after my arrival in New York, and that I approve the action they took.

"The Funding Board was confronted with the tremendous task of borrowing \$9,222,000 in a few days' time on the closest money market that this country has seen in many years.

"If the loan sought by the board had been only a few hundred thousand dollars, the amount of an ordinary county bond issue, the matter could have been easily handled. There would have been plenty of competition among money lenders. But for an amount so large, the available time so short and the general demand for money so strong, it was a foregone conclusion that no one institution would undertake the matter, but that it would necessarily be handled by a syndicate of bankers and brokers.

"Under all these unfavorable conditions the board made every conceivable effort to get the money at the lowest rate possible. It would be tedious to relate in detail their efforts along this line. The best bid they could obtain on the entire amount was approximately 7 per cent. To be exact, the bid was 98.1 for 5 per cent notes.

### PROPER COURSE

"The board therefore had choice between two alternatives, to accept the best bid obtainable or to let the state default in the payment of its bonded debt July 1.

"I may say that so far as I am personally concerned I never felt the least (Continued on Page 3)

## MR. HENRY PECK AND HIS FAMILY AFFAIRS

By Gross

